

The Stories of Fort Matanzas

Standards-Based Activities (4th-5th grade)

NOTE: This activity set can stand alone or be used as an introduction for a fieldtrip to Fort Matanzas National Monument, St. Augustine, Florida (904) 471-0116

Contents:

- 1) Reading**
- 2) Writing**
- 3) Math**
- 4) Answer Page**

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**For more Standards-Based Activities in science and social studies,
check out <http://pelotes.jea.com>.**

The Stories of Fort Matanzas

Although Fort Matanzas National Monument was created in 1924 to preserve the small Spanish outpost fort on one acre of land on Rattlesnake Island, the park has now grown to almost 300 acres, and its stories encompass more than just that of the little fort.

In fact, the story goes back over 4000 years ago to when the coastal areas of northeast Florida were occupied by Indians. These people did not have a written language, so we know them only by their trash heaps or middens. At Summer Haven, just south of present-day Fort Matanzas, a midden was found which contained oyster, clam and coquina shells, the remains of sharks, turtles, fish, deer, small mammals, snakes and water birds, and bits of simple pottery.

These people probably lived in family groups in small villages. They spent the winter months along the coasts, and then during the spring and summer they moved west to the St. Johns River where each family may have planted a small plot of corn, beans, and squash. What these people called themselves is unknown, but to the early European explorers, they were known as Timucua.

Some of these Europeans were French Huguenots, a group following the new Protestant religion who settled in 1564 near present-day Jacksonville in a stockaded village they called Fort Caroline. However, the Spanish believed Florida was their land, going back to the explorations of Ponce de Leon in 1513. In 1565, the Spanish king sent Pedro Menendez and an army to drive out the French and to establish a Spanish settlement so no one else would trespass. This settlement became known as St. Augustine.

Menendez marched his army north to attack Fort Caroline, but the French soldiers had taken their ships to attack St. Augustine. A big storm, perhaps even a hurricane, drove the fleet to the south where the French were shipwrecked near present-day Daytona and New Smyrna. They had lost their muskets, armor, swords, and food in the wreck, but began to walk north up the beach, hoping to return to Fort Caroline.

The Spanish, who had easily captured undefended Fort Caroline, returned to St. Augustine. Indians told them of white men on the beach. It must be the French! So the Spanish journeyed south about fifteen miles where they found the French, their way blocked by an inlet. Hungry and exhausted, the French surrendered to the Spanish. The Spanish brought them across the Inlet where Menendez ordered them killed. Only a few were spared-- some who professed to be Catholic like the Spanish and a few skilled tradesmen needed in the new colony. In all, there were nearly 250 killed. From that time, the inlet and river were known as *Matanzas*, the Spanish word for "slaughters". One wonders if this was an act motivated by religion, or with food already low in St. Augustine, was Menendez doing what he had to do for his own colony's survival.

Now the story jumps ahead a hundred years. The enemy now was Great Britain. When the British established Charleston only two days away by sailing ship, the Spanish knew they needed to build a stronger fort to protect St. Augustine. So in 1772 they began the twenty-three year job of building the Castillo de San Marcos out of coquina stone, a type of locally quarried shell limestone. But no fort was built yet at Matanzas.

The British attacked St. Augustine twice--in 1702 and again in 1740. However, the porous coquina stone absorbed the energy of the cannon strikes, and the British could not breach the walls. In 1740 they then attempted to starve the Spanish into surrendering by blockading the main inlet at St. Augustine and the smaller inlet at Matanzas. No supply ships could get in, and no message for help could get out.

However, the Spanish sent two small boats to try to get out the Matanzas Inlet and go for help. Although one was captured, the other got out and made it to Havana, the closest Spanish town to St. Augustine. The voyage to Cuba took at least ten days, but they did get the needed food and ammunition and were able to sneak it in the Matanzas Inlet, which the British by that time had given up guarding.

This attack had shown the importance of the Matanzas Inlet. Not only was it St. Augustine's lifeline to the outside, but it was also a weak point, a place where the British might try to sneak in, sail up the river, and hit St. Augustine from the rear. The decision was made to begin construction of Fort Matanzas without delay. This time, it would be a real fort, small and built in a hurry, but built to last and built for cannon. It worked. The British returned, but Fort Matanzas kept them out. St. Augustine was never attacked again once Fort Matanzas was built to guard the back door.

The United States gained Florida in 1821, but its army did not need the little fort, either. It sat unused. Its hastily built walls began to crack; the wooden carriages under the abandoned Spanish cannon rotted away. Trees and other plants took root on the deck where brave soldiers once kept watch. The floor between the two rooms collapsed. Fort Matanzas sat alone and forgotten for nearly 100 years.

But it was not completely forgotten. The St. Augustine Historical Society knew that this piece of history was important and worked to get it preserved. In 1916 the US Congress granted money, and the first preservation work was completed. Additional work was done in the 1920s after Fort Matanzas was named a National Monument by President Coolidge.

In 1933 Fort Matanzas was transferred to the National Park Service, and in the late 1930's further restoration work was done as a WPA project, one of President Franklin Roosevelt's work programs to help unemployed people during the Great Depression. Over the years, more land was added to the monument, both by purchase and by donation. Fort Matanzas National Monument, now preserves not only the old Spanish fort, but also nearly 300 acres of beach, salt marsh, and coastal oak forest. Fort Matanzas is either the home of or is used by endangered or protected species such as loggerhead and green sea turtles, the Anastasia Island beach mouse, eastern indigo snake, manatee, and gopher tortoise.

The stories of Fort Matanzas have come full circle. Where the Timucua once knew the woods and marshes and the deer, dolphins, turtles, fish, and water birds which roamed wild on these lands and in the water, now these creatures still roam here, protected in one of over 380 National Park areas in the United States. With over 800 people moving to Florida every day, it becomes more and more important to preserve and protect natural areas like Fort Matanzas National Monument, like the little Fort Matanzas once protected St. Augustine.

References

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[Http://www.staugustine.com/castillo/castillo.shtml](http://www.staugustine.com/castillo/castillo.shtml). "Castillo de San Marcos," The St. Augustine Record, 8/13/01.

The Stories of Fort Matanzas National Monument

Standards-Based Reading Questions

1. Why do we not know very much about the early Indians who lived in Florida? What can help us find out about their lives? Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

**Read
Think
Explain**

2. Based on the information in the article, why did the French surrender to the Spanish?

- a) They thought the Spanish would take them back to Fort Caroline.
- b) The Spanish promised to feed them.
- c) They were too tired and hungry to fight or run.
- d) They were afraid the Indians would kill them if they ran away.

3. The article states that the British planned to "starve the Spanish into surrendering by "blockading the inlet". Using context clues, what is the meaning of the word "blockade"?

- a) Cut the telephone lines so the Spanish could not send a message for help.
- b) Guard the inlets with ships.
- c) Close off the inlet with big blocks of wood.
- d) Capture all the supply ships.

4. Why is it important for the National Park Service to protect Fort Matanzas and the area around it? Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

**Read
Think
Explain**

The Stories of Fort Matanzas National Monument

Standards-Based Writing Questions

1. Some historians think the French were killed because they refused to give up what they believed as Protestants and become Catholics like the Spanish. Think about a time when someone tried to make you change your mind about something. Write a story about this incident.

2. National Parks are created to protect special places in America. Some of these are historical like president's homes and the Castillo de San Marcos, and some are natural areas like Yellowstone. Some are both. Think about a National Park you have visited-- The Castillo de San Marcos, Fort Matanzas, or another. Write to explain why you think it is a special place.
[This could be used as a post-visit activity.]

3. During the siege of 1740, the survival of the people of St. Augustine depended on the message for help reaching Cuba. Two little boats were sent out with this responsibility. Think about a time when you were given an important job to do. What might have happened if you did not do it? Write a story about this time.

4. The soldiers left their wives and families and went to Fort Matanzas for a month at a time. They might have been bored or lonely. Think about a time when you were away from your family. How did you feel? Write a story about this time away.

5. Close to 900 people move to Florida every day. Many of them like to live close to the ocean. Think about the land around Fort Matanzas. Write to explain what this area might look like if it had not been preserved as a National Park sixty years ago.
(Post-visit activity)

The Stories of Fort Matanzas National Monument

Standards-Based Math Questions

1. How much larger is the park now than it was when first made a national monument?
 - a) 2 times larger
 - b) 5 times larger
 - c) 100 times larger
 - d) 300 times larger

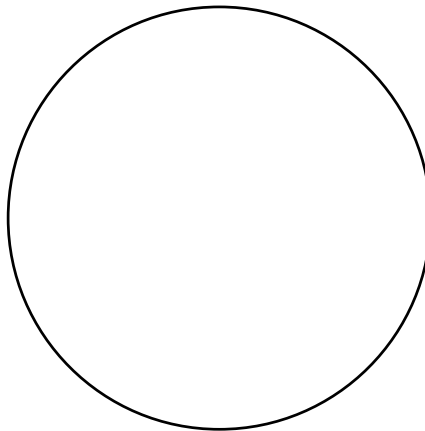
2. The Spanish founded the settlement of St. Augustine. They held Florida until 1763 when the British took over by treaty. The British held Florida for only 21 years when another treaty gave it back to Spain after the American Revolution. From the article, find out when the Spanish settled St. Augustine and when the United states took over by treaty. A) How long did the Spanish hold St. Augustine? B) How long has St. Augustine belonged to the United States? Show your work.

THINK
SOLVE
EXPLAIN

3. In 1916 Fort Matanzas and the Castillo de San Marcos were the first structures to receive money from Congress for historical preservation. Over the years, other repairs were done at Fort Matanzas as money became available. Using the information in the chart titled "Repairs to Fort Matanzas", draw a pie graft, charting this data. Be sure to title and label your graph.

Repairs to Fort Matanzas

1916-1917	20% of total repair work done
1924-1929	30% of total repair work done
1936-1940	25% " " " "
1950s	12.5% " " " "
1970s to present	12.5% " " " "



On the line below write a sentence describing your graft.

THINK
SOLVE
EXPLAIN

The Stories of Fort Matanzas National Monument Answers

Reading

1. Use the rubric for Short Response Reading Questions – 2 points
[S.S.S.], Level [bloom's taxonomy level 1 or 2]

Example of a Top-Score Response

We do not know very much about the early Indians because they did not have a written language. We can find out some things like what they ate and where they lived by looking at the trash piles or middens they left behind.

2. (c) [S.S.S.], Level [bloom's taxonomy level 1 or 2]
3. (b) [S.S.S.], Level [bloom's taxonomy level 1 or 2]
4. Use the rubric for Extended Response Reading Questions – 4 points
[S.S.S.], Level [bloom's taxonomy level 1 or 2]

Example of a Top-Score Response

It is important to protect Fort Matanzas because it is so old and is so important in the history of our country. It is also important to protect the natural area around the fort because it is like the Florida of long ago with natural areas like the beach, marsh, and oak forests. It is also the home of many endangered species such as loggerhead and green sea turtles, the Anastasia Island beach mouse, eastern indigo snake, manatee, and gopher tortoise. With so many people moving to Florida every day there is getting to be fewer natural areas and fewer places for the animals to live. Therefore, it is important to preserve places like Fort Matanzas National Monument

Writing

For All – Use the rubric for Florida Writes! – 6 points

1. LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.5
2. LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.6
3. LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.5
4. LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.5
5. LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.6

The Stories of Fort Matanzas National Monument Answers Continued

Math

1. d) MA.
2. Use the rubric for Short Response Math Questions – 2 points
MA.

Example of a Top-Score Response

Answer is A) 235 years B) 180 years (in 2001) 181 years (in 2002)

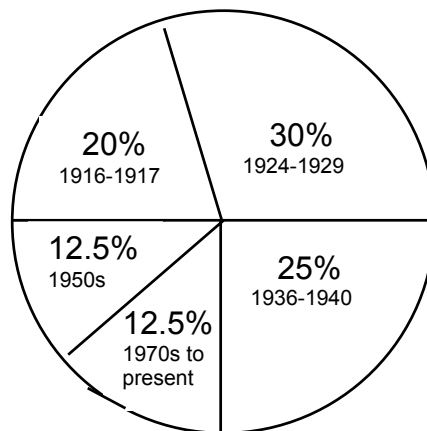
$$\begin{array}{r} \text{A) } 1763 \\ - 1565 \\ \hline 198 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 1763 \\ + 21 \\ \hline 1784 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 1821 \\ - 1784 \\ \hline 37 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 198 \\ + 37 \\ \hline 235 \text{ years (Spanish)} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{B) } 2001 \\ - 1821 \\ \hline 180 \text{ years (United States)} \end{array} \quad \text{or} \quad \begin{array}{r} 2002 \\ - 1821 \\ \hline 181 \text{ years (United States)} \end{array}$$

3. Use the rubric for Extended Response Math Questions – 4 points
MA.E.1.2.1

Example of a Top-Score Response

Percentage of repair work done through
The years at Fort Matanzas



A sentence describing the graph--
Most repair work to Fort Matanzas
was done during the period 1924-1929.

Note to Teachers:

In addition, a field trip to Fort Matanzas combined with classroom discussion and activities may aid the student in completing the following Science and Social Studies Strands and Standards:

Science

Strand--How living things interact with their environment

1. The student understands the competitive, interdependent, cyclic nature of living things in the environment.
2. The student understands the consequences of using limited natural resources.

Social Studies

Strand-- Time, Continuity, and Change

1. The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective.
4. The student understands US history to 1880.
5. The student understands the history of Florida and its people.

Strand-- People, Places, and Environment

2. The student understands the interactions of people and the physical environment.

Strand--Production, Distribution, and Consumption

1. The student understands how scarcity requires individuals and institutions to make choices about how to use available resources.

Resources:

Sunshine State Standards can be found at <http://finr.edu/doe//menu/ssss.htm>

Grading Rubrics can be found at <http://www.finr.edu/sas/fcat.htm> under "What Every Teacher Should Know About FCAT"

Additional information about FCAT can be found at <http://www.finr.edu/sas/fcat.htm>